



FRIENDS OF BRAMCOTE RIDGE

GREEN FLAG COMMUNITY AWARD. NEWS UPDATE.

Good news! We have just been informed that we have received this award for 2015/16. This is for the seventh consecutive year and is a just reward for all those who turn out for our monthly working sessions. A big thank you to you all.

GRASSLAND and WILDFLOWER AREAS ON OUR TWO RESERVES.



Alexandrina Plantation. The annual wildflower area near the Sandy Lane entrance was sown at the beginning of April only with poppy, cornflower and corncockle seed instead of the usual cornfield mixture. This was to try to reduce the dominance of the white corn chamomile but this is not quite how it has worked out. Clearly the seeds of the corn chamomile are very prolific and this is despite the site being sprayed with weed killer in February. Nevertheless the area still looked very colourful and was much admired. The

triangular patch near Brookside Ave was not sown with new seed this year and was also sprayed with weed killer in February. Last year it was almost entirely covered with corn marigold but the kindest we can say about it this year is that it is colourful! We will have to do some serious work on this site in the autumn period ready for fresh seed to be sown next year.

The two areas of perennial wildflowers (behind Burnside Rd) are now well established with a good mixture of plants including trefoil, clover, yellow rattle, mallow and ox-eye daisy.



Sandy Lane Open Space (Markham Rd site). Here the grassland area which was sown in May last year is now well established but what has been a surprise is the number of different wildflowers growing within the grasses. There is a lot of bird's foot trefoil and ox-eye daisy but also good numbers of red and white clover, knapweed, hawkweed, buttercup, yellow rattle and even a few foxgloves alongside the hedge. As we hoped, this area, with its increased diversity of grasses and plants, is proving very beneficial to butterflies and birds quite apart from the fact that it looks so attractive. In early July we had already had more Meadow Brown butterflies on this area alone than we normally get on the whole reserve.

PATHWAY REPAIRS AND NEW INSTALLATION

Broxtowe Borough Council had arranged for a new hard surfaced path to be installed alongside the grassland area and this leads directly off the main pathway on the Markham Rd site to replace a muddy track. We asked if some repairs could also be done on the short section of the path near the Sandy Lane entrance where every time heavy rain falls the water gathers in one area. This part of the path has had the level lifted to see if this will shed the muddy water and so far this seems to be working.

WORKING SESSIONS REPORTS : MAY TO JULY 2015

In May, despite drizzle and light rain, we had nine hardy volunteers turn out. We completed the seeding of the wildflower area; cleared weeds from the areas around the primroses and cowslips; did the usual litter picks and washed the interpretation boards and other signs. The June session followed some strong winds which had brought down a lot of debris onto the bridle path which we cleared and also cut back the encroaching bramble and nettles from the sides of this path. Also cleared was a path leading from the wildflower area to the rock which had become completely overgrown and overhanging branches from around the main circular path were removed. July too was a month for clearing pathways on both reserves and a thorough clean up of the rocky outcrop where some people had been “partying” and left broken glass and lots of litter behind. Whilst waiting for others to finish and return the tools I was talking to a man I hadn't met before, who said how much he had enjoyed the wildflower area over the years and that he had a photo of it on his computer screen in London . To my surprise before leaving he insisted on giving our group a very generous £40 donation towards the costs of new seed.

Next working session dates are on Aug 2, Sept 6, Oct 4 and Nov1.

MEMBER'S PHOTOGRAPH

Whether you like them or loathe them I am sure you will agree that this picture captures perfectly the look of surprise on the face of this grey squirrel. Many thanks to Enid Swetnam for this excellent photograph and remember to send your ridge photos to me at jrappleton@aol.com

